The Captivity Of Olive Oatman

Courtesy Southern Oregon Historical Society #15366

Eagle Point Historical Society November 1996 $1.50

The Ruben Peyton buckskin Wild West Show outfit is now on display at the Eagle Point Museum. It is on loan from Southern Oregon Historical Society for the month of November. Be sure to stop by and see this rare artifact worn by Ruben when he performed in the Wild West Shows with "Pawnee Bill" in 1885. Ruben moved to the upper Rogue in 1887 and raised a large family. There are many descendants living in the Rogue Valley.

"Museum Kidnapping Day"

It is always interesting to hear people who live or work within a few hundred feet of a famous or historical place and have them admit they have never seen it. We find this true of the Eagle Point Museum. Although we have the second largest collection in Jackson county and thousands of our own early pioneer items to show, many local workers and business owners have not been to the museum.

We have come up with an idea to solve that problem, so watch out for our "Museum Kidnapping Crew". These friendly kidnappers will take you by car and escort you to the museum. Here you will be treated royally to a special tour and refreshments too.

And don't worry, we will make sure your boss gets kidnapped too, so you won't get fired.

"Standing Bear"
On display is this life size painting by "Deanie" Phillips (a Peyton descendant). "Standing Bear" was chief of the Pawnee Indians Ruben Payton used in the Wild West show.

Cover Photo

Back of photo reads [copied exactly].
"Dear friend Abi
accept this as a token of rememberence from your friend Olive. How do you do my friend and sister? I do not know wheather to call you Abi Colver or not for I have not heard wheather you are married or not. Please write me direct to Rochester N.Y."

Editor,
Barbara Hegne

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The Captivity Of Olive Oatman

The story of the Oatman family is one of the most tragic episodes of a wagon train massacre in western history. Although this event occured in Arizona, after Olive Oatman was released from the Indians, she was brought to the Rogue Valley by her cousin Harvey Oatman. She stayed for a time with the Steven P.Taylor family. Mrs. Abigail Taylor taught Olive to sew, and her daughter, Rachel, a teacher, retaught her to read and write. Olive also became life long friends with the Samuel Colver family and called Abi Colver her 'sister".

Royce Oatman had a foreboding feeling of doom, a feeling he could no longer hide from his wife and seven children. Other wagon train members had decided to stay at Tucson, but Royce was impatient to get to Yuma. He left Tucson early in March 1851 and after days of impassable roads and frequent unloading and hand pushing the wagon to the top of every hill, Royce sank to the ground. He cried the words of a beaten man, "Mother, Mother, in the name of God, I know that something dreadful is about to happen."

Mrs. Oatman tried to encourage her worried husband, but he seemed too distracted to listen. That night 16-year old Lucy heard her father crying bitterly in the wagon. He was alone and thought no one could hear him.

Royce had been sure he could make it to Fort Yuma especially if he traveled by moonlight. Not only would they be safe from the Indians, but the animals would fare better.

Camped near the Gila River 70 miles from Fort Yuma, Royce threw the last bundle of baggage on the wagon. Then Lorenzo's excited voice drew the family's attention to a band of Apaches coming into camp. The children knew the Apache Indians were a fierce breed. and although Royce tried to act unemotional, the fear in his voice was plain. He knew his next move meant life or death for himself and his family.

Royce Oatman was born in New York as were his two cousins, Harvey and Harrison Oatman. The Oatman clan all migrated to Illinois where in 1850 the talk of opportunities further west was on everyone's lips. Harvey and Harrison were interested in going to Oregon Territory, but Royce had been suffering health problems and thought the climate further south would be better. He joined a group headed to the new Mexican Territory to begin a settlement.

Fifty members of the wagon train left Independence, Missouri, August 10, 1850. The Oatman family consisted of 41-year old Royce, his wife Mary, age 38, Lucy, age 16, Lorenzo age 14, Olive age 13, Mary Ann age 7, Royce Jr., C.A., and "baby brother".

The group started out in good spirits, but it wasn't long before disagreements split the train. Some took the northern route and the others, including, the Oatman's, took the southern route.

By the time the wagons reached the Rio Grande, the Indians had stolen two of Royce's horses and 20 head of stock from the rest of the families. At Tucson, most all of the group decided to stay.The Oatmans, Kellys, and Wilders pressed on toward the next village.

The trip was difficult and many Apaches were seen on the horizon. On February 16, 1851, bone weary and discouraged, the wagons rolled into a Pimole Indian village. The Kellys and Wilders decided to stay at Pimole and wait for assistance while Royce believed it was just as dangerous to stay as to press on the 190 miles to Fort Yuma. Dr. Le Conte, and his guide, arrived at the Pimole camp.They had just come from Yuma and told Royce they had

seen no Indians and had made the trip fine.

Although their provisions were low, Royce decided "with God's protection" to chance the trip. On March 11, 1851 they started out.

They suffered many hardships on the trail and Royce began to show signs of despair. Olive Oatman later wrote of her parents distress. *"I shal[l] never forget the sad look of my Father and Mother as those dark clouds gathered around them. They seemed to comprehend the perils of the way & the danger threatening themselves & their helpless offspring."

Mrs. Oatman was better able to hide her fears and patiently attend to the family needs, but now with 19 Apaches surrounding their camp site, even she was terrified.

The Indians asked for pipe and tobacco and Royce smoked with them in peace and friendship. Then, they asked for food. Royce explained his food supply was low, but he gave them some bread. When the Indians demanded more food, Royce said no that he didn't have enough to feed his family. The Indians quickly gathered to themselves and began to talk in their own language and make expressions that scared the children.

Suddenly the Indians gave a deafening yell and began to attack. Olive later wrote: "As an Indian was taking me to one side, I saw them strike Lorenzo down and in an instant afterward my father also. I was so bewildered and surprised that it was some little time before I could realize the full horror of the situation. When I turned around and collected my thought, I saw my father, my own dear father, struggling, bleeding and moaning in the most pitiful manner. Lorenzo was lying with his face in the dust with the top of his head covered with blood. I looked around and saw my poor, dear mother lying on the ground with the baby clasped in her arms; both of them were still as if the work of death had been completed."

After the Indians killed the family, they herded Olive and seven-year old Mary Ann ahead of them making them walk barefooted day and night. When Mary Ann fell and could walk no longer, they beat her, but when she did not respond one Indian had to load her on his shoulders and pack her to their Indian camp 200 miles from the massacre site.

Arriving at the camp the girls were put on a pile of brush and the Indians danced, shouted, and spit in their faces.

Food was scarce and many members starved. The women did the work and Olive and Mary Ann were made slaves. Mary Ann was ill and could not gather food or work well. She said to Olive, **"Oh Olive, I must starve unless I can get something more to eat." There would be no escape for these girls and they knew it.

After about a year the girls were sold to the Mohave Indians. The girls were given tattoos on their chins in case they ran away they would be recognized by other tribes as Mohave slaves.

A famine struck the Mohave tribe. Several Indian children died as did Mary Ann Oatman. Olive thought this was the last of her family, but unknown to her, Lorenzo did not die in the Indian attack, he had only been wounded and he had been searching for her for years.

That fateful massacre day, Lorenzo had been struck on the head and left for dead. Two Indians went through his pockets, took his shoes and hat and dragged him to a spot where they left him for dead. Lorenzo could not see or stand up, but he could hear the terrible massacre that was happening around him. He knew the Indians had taken Olive and Mary Ann. It was some time before Lorenzo could manage to walk. He could not bear to look on the horrible massacre scene of his dead family. He started out, racked with pain, trying to retrace the wagon trail. Smelling his blood, a pack of wolves followed him, but Lorenzo was able to yell and scare them off.

After heat-filled days of stumbling around, Lorenzo saw something moving along the distant horizon. He was sure it was Indians, then as they got closer he saw covered wagons. To his joy, the first wagons were the Kellys' and Wilders'. When Lorenzo told his story, Mr. Kelly and Mr. Wilder went to the massacre site and buried the family. They buried six persons.

* Olive Ann Oatman's Lecture Notes edited by Reverend Edward J. Pettid Feb. 1969. ** Stratton R. B. Captivity of the Oatman Girls.

Lorenzo was taken to Fort Yuma. He vowed to find his two sisters. Little did he realize the long wait ahead.

It was five years later that Francisco, a Uma Indian from Fort Yuma, came into camp looking for Olive. The Mohaves were distressed and agitated at the news. Some wanted to kill Olive, but others believed that would bring too much trouble. The Mohaves warned Olive to not talk to Francisco and hid her from him.

The Mohaves tried to discourage Francisco, but he told them many whites would come and attack them. The Indians demanded horses, blankets, beads and money as ransom for Olive. When the deal was made, Olive was allowed to go with Francisco accompanied by the Mohave Chief's daughter. It was a 250 mile walk, but Olive's footsteps were light and her heart was full of joy. She had been in captivity five long years and she didn't know, until she reached the fort, that Lorenzo was still alive.

When Lorenzo came to the fort it was such a joyful meeting between brother and sister that it was almost an hour before either could speak. Olive would later speak of that emotional reunion. "The past came looming up; the checkered past, with childhood & its sunny visions, the toils & anxieties, of almost a years journeying over the plains & among the mountains, the blo[o]dy butchery of that night, when the wailing & praying of a defenseless family-strangely commingled with the fiendish yells & horrid blows, of nineteen infuriated savages.

"All this taken in connection with five years of tears & hunger, came rushing in upon the memory with such over-whelming power at our meeting,that language failed us; for our souls were stir[r]ed with indescribable emotions."

Olive and Lorenzo were taken to the Rogue River Valley in Jackson County by their cousin Harvey Oatman. Here Olive stayed with Stephen Taylor and his wife Abigail. The Taylor's daughter, Rachel, a teacher, re-taught Olive to read and write.

A granddaughter of Abigail Taylor wrote in her memoirs that Olive sometimes paced the floor for hours, weeping. "They could hear her all night. Just pacing the floor..."

Olive seemed ashamed of her tattoo marks etched deeply on her chin. She would cover them with her hand when she met anyone.

However, Olive was considered a heroine. Welborn Beeson, an early Jacksonville pioneer wrote of Olive, "Olive Oatman the heroine was at church meeting. She has 5 streaks colloured on her chin by the Indians when she was a prisoner."

While Olive was in captivity the Indian wars continued in southern Oregon and the Rogue Valley. Olive's cousins, Harvey and Harrison Oatman arrived in the Rogue Valley in 1853. They had adjoining donation land claims near Gasburg (Phoenix), Oregon. In 1853, several white men had been killed by Indians near Jacksonville. Two Indians, George & Tom, were arrested and sentenced to be hanged. Because of the Oatman family tragedy, Harry was granted the task of driving the wagon out from under the Indian George. *"On this occasion, Indian George gave a loud war whoop as the wagon began to move out from under him, and the surrounding hills—perhaps the only thing present in sympathy with the victim—echoed the cry for a brief second of time....."

In Sept. 1855, the *Statesman* gave a report on Jacksonville: "Dear Bush, we have further Indian outrages to record...H. B. Oatman"..."Last Tues eve, Sept 25, about 4 O'clock Messrs H. B. Oatman, Daniels, Britton, Fields, & a boy by the name of Cunningham, whose first name I do not know were fired upon by Indians & Mr. Fields and young Cunningham were Killed."

Both Oatman brothers were involved deeply in the Indian Wars. Harrison Oatman, served as a Lieutenant at Fort Klamath 1865-6. One of his granddaughters was named Olive.

In June 1858, Olive and Lorenzo went to New York. R. B. Stratton wrote a book on Olive and she toured for a year giving lectures. Lorenzo re-

Quote from Fidler W.W. "Reminiscences of Samuel L. Simpson, Oregon Historical Quarterly pg. 270.
Olive Ann Oatman's Lecture Notes edited by Reverend Edward J. Pettid Feb. 1969.

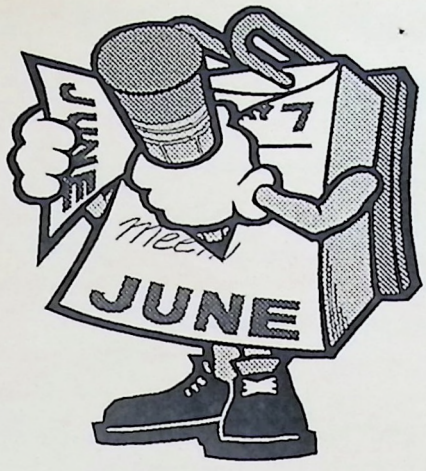
joined his family in Illinois near the original Oatman homeplace.

Olive married a well-to-do man named John Brant Fairchild. They moved to Texas. Olive and John adopted a daughter, "Mamie" Fairchild. Olive died in 1903 at the age of sixty-five.

References:

Stratton R.B. "Captivity of the Oatman Girls, 1909. Lewis Ray, "The Captivity of Olive Oatman", Table Rock Sentinel Feb. 1982. Notes of Nevah Taylor. *Daily Alta California* Jan. 21, 1851, 1/11/1856, 3/24/1856, 4/24/1856. California Historical Society Quarterly, Rice, Wm. B., "The Captivity of Olive Oatman: a newspaper account and Kroeber, Al & Kroeber, Clifton "Olive Oatman's first account of her captivity among the Mohave". Father Ed Pettid, "The Oatman Story", Arizona Highways Magazine November 1968. Father Ed Pettid, "Smoke Signals, Colorado River Indian Tribes" Jackson County Census 1860 to 1880. Wallings A.G., "The History of Southern Oregon'. *Oregon Sentinel* June 5, 1858. Welborn Beeson files, Southern Oregon Historical Society. Oregon Historical Quarterly Mar-Dec. Vol 64.

Note: On some of Olive's photos she requested the tatoo marks be erased from the pictures. Photos: Olive Oatman and her brother Lorenzo. Lady on left is Abigail Taylor who offered Olive her home after her release. Photos courtesy Eagle Point Historical Society.



Time Capsule To Be Opened in 60 years, 2056

UPDATE ON OUR TIME CAPSULE:

A time capsule, full of modern and past history, will be gathered together at the Eagle Point Historical Society to celebrate the new addition to the building. Inside the aluminium capsule (made especially for this purpose), will be items of yesterday, modern news stories and items that express the trends and interest of today. We plan to have our youngest member put something in the capsule and (or a descendant) open it in the year 2056.

We need $770.00 for this project. So far our donations are: Western Bank $50, Pacific Power $75, Eagle Point Golf Course $25, Sprint $300, Mr. & Mrs. Scheressler $7.50. If you would like to help us with this project send your tax free donation to Eagle Point Historical Society capsule donation, P. O. Box 201 Eagle Point, Ore. 97524.

We are also planning to place a scroll in the capsule with names of interested persons. A donation of $10 will put your name on the scroll.

Old photo recently discovered of Tobias Charles Linkswiler's cabin. It was built around 1853 when he first arrived on Little Butte Creek, and filed a donation land claim. Tobias' land began just below the junction of Alta Vista & Hwy 62 and went south across Antelope Creek almost to Dutton Road. Mr. Linksweiler lived his entire life on Little Butte Creek. In 1863, he married Hannah Riley, a widow with six children. Her husband, John died on Antelope Creek in 1859. Photo courtesy David Courier. David also donated a photo of Tobias Linkswiler. We are happy to finally know what he looked like.

John & Hannah Riley descendants:
Ft: Hattie, Elsie, Margaret, Joseph, Ethel.
Bk: Hannah, Jim & Tom

Thanks To Everyone
We DID IT!

More Of Everything

Our new 1200 square foot edition is finished, and in fine style too. We are now able to put displays in order and in categories. We have created a country kitchen with an old fashioned stove, lamps, cast iron pots, butter churns and all the comforts of a pioneer kitchen. Our sewing center features a spinning wheel, sewing machine, hand made blankets, bedspreads and two cases full of buttons and sewing items.

High on the walls, photos of our early pioneers look down on their own treasures from the past.

The "Local Celebrity" case stars Ginger Rogers, Maddox Brothers and Rose, The Rogue River Cowboys, Kevin Hagen,"Doc Baker", of "Little House on The Prairie", musical instruments from the pioneer Daley band and items from the Oasis Dance Hall.

Two children's display cases are full of dolls, story books, Raggedy Ann items, marbles, toys, clothing, and much more to please the eye of the young beholder.

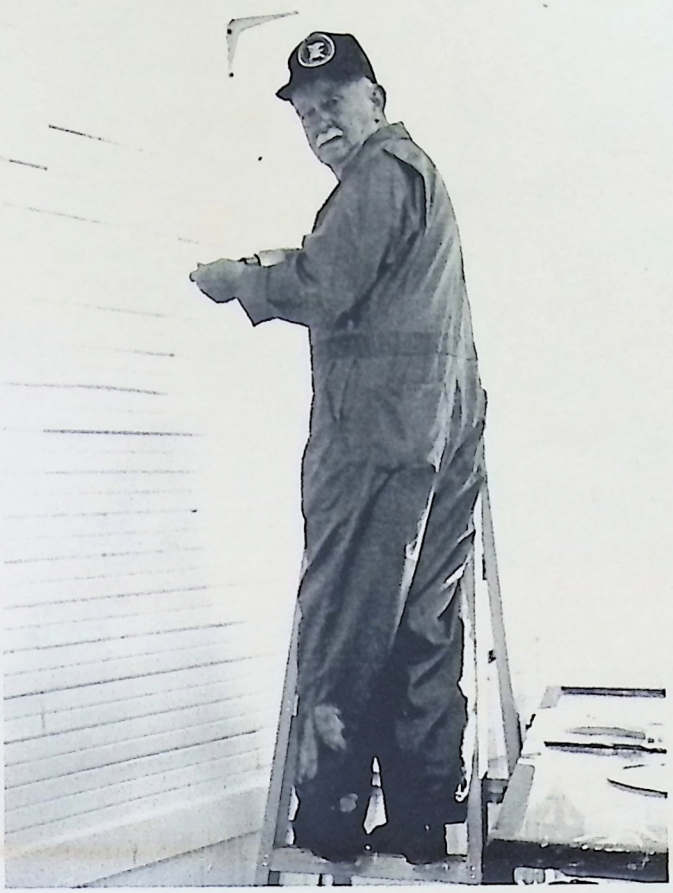
Our walls hold logging, farming, and agriculture tools.

Whether you like antique glassware, jewelry, old fashioned clothes, Indian artifacts, cameras, or Edison phonographs, we have it all. As a matter of fact, WE HAVE THE SECOND LARGEST ARTIFACT COLLECTION IN JACKSON COUNTY AND WE ARE PROUD.

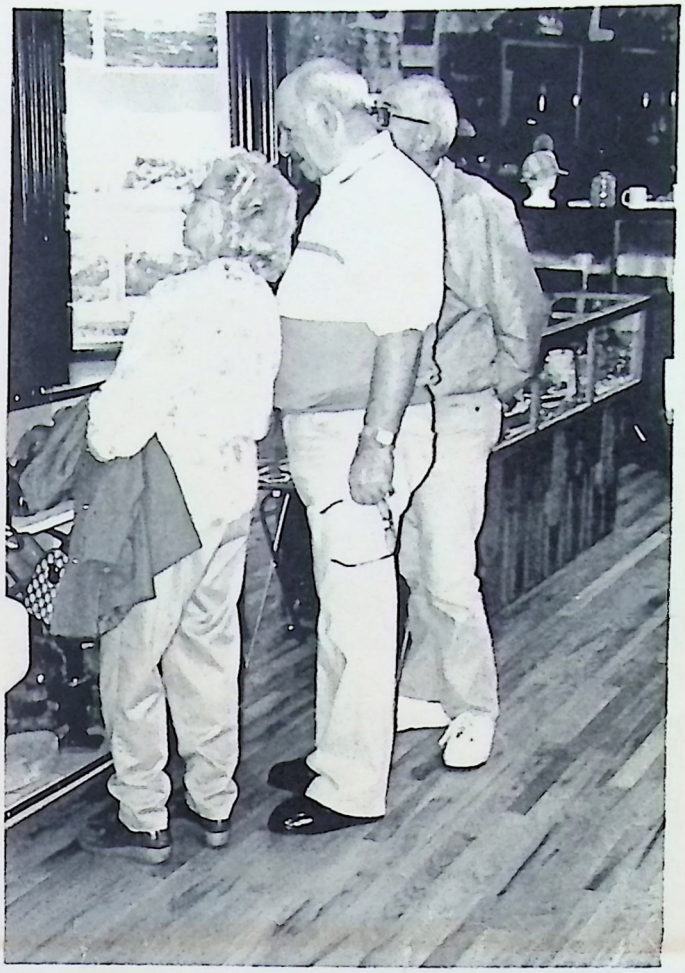
In addition, we have a large research library with enormous file records of the early settlers in and around our area.

Come visit YOUR museum. Winter Hours are: Thurs, Friday & Sunday noon until 4pm; Saturday 10 am until 4pm, and Tuesday 9am until 4pm. We will gladly open other hours with sufficient notice. Call Barbara 826-9725 or the Museum 826-4166.

THESE PEOPLE ARE MAKING THE MUSEUM WORK



Ernie Redington, an endless volunteer



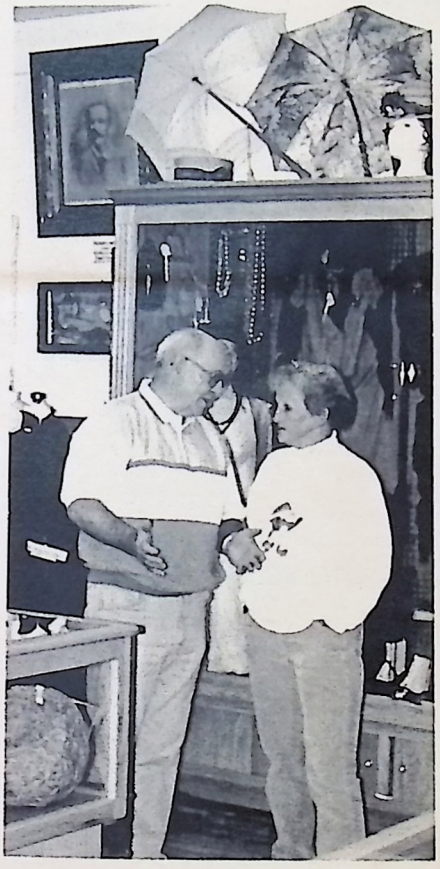
Ed Dahack donated all the museum land and grounds. He is showing his sister Vickie and Elmer Harnish some of their old school chums.

Helen Wolgmott & Gerry Craver keep the musem landscape alive with beauty

Celebrating a special preview opening of the museum are: (left to right) Virginia Cutler, Ann Brookins, Inita Kaiser, Arlene Hoffman, Midge Harnish, Sharon Barker, Carole Reynolds and Don Reynolds.

Center: Far left: Larry & Carol Vaughn, Everette Jennings, Ernie Redington & Tina Redington

Left: Walt Barker. Right: Helen Wolgamott, Gerry Craver and Lynn Helgedalen



Top: Barbara Hegne. Below: Ed Dahack explains something to Ann Brookins. Right: Beryl Hickson, Amy & Ben Dawson.

Remembering The Brownsboro School

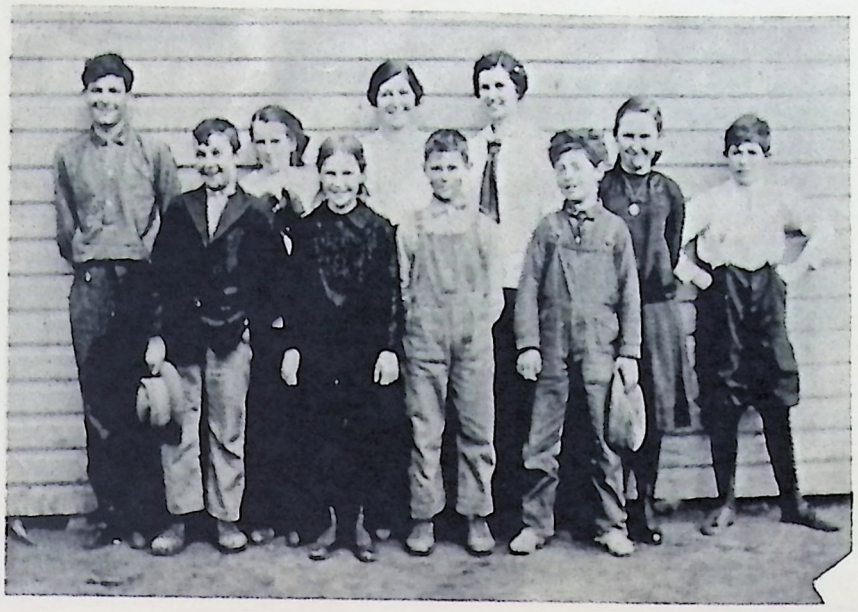
Brownsboro School Dist. # 39 was officially opened in 1873 and took the name of Bethlehem from the abandoned district east of it. In 1876, it became Brownsboro. The original spelling was Brownsborough. In 1917, E. R. Peterson, rural school supervisor of Jackson County Schools, wrote a Journal and report of the status of the local schools. For Brownsboro he wrote: "One of the old communities where the school conditions were 'good enough for Dad and they're good enough for me.' Could profit by consolidation with 6, or possibly with Eagle Point. Prosperous farming community, but little active interest shown in school matters. Needs a general awakening. In 1953 Brownsboro consolidated with Eagle Point Dist. # 9. Photo courtesy Margaret Henry

Mary (Stanley) Henshaw, now age 88, attended the old Brownsboro school in 1919 along with her three brothers, Ed, John and Merrill. She fondly remembers her teachers, Edith Kubli and Frances Greb. "The teacher did janitor work and built the fire. There was a well outdoors and we had a school bell. The school sat near Little Butte Creek and in the winter, when it froze, over we would go gliding on it. The worst winter was in 1918. We had so much snow, we had to stay home.

Mary names some of her class mates like she was in school yesterday. "Eleanor Hansen and her little brother, Gerald, Ellen Tucker, Stella (can't remember her last name, but she had a brace on her leg). Some organization placed her at the school and she boarded with the Tucker family. Della & Lyle Hard, Clare Logan, the Monia children Vernon, Velda, Eldred and Donna. We moved to Eagle Point in 1920 and I went to school in the two-story building. The eighth grade was held upstairs. Josie Riley Holmes was the teacher. All my teachers were nice."

Mary Stanley, Sept. 1922, standing in front of the old James Fryer place on S. Shasta

Brownsboro School, 1917



Only a few names of the students in the photo were available including: Floyd Charley, Mary Monia, Mildred Tucker, and Nita Marshall.

The School roll for the year 1919 was: Stella Adams, Nellie Butler, Don Carl Bieberstadt, Elinor Hansen, Fred, Vernon & Glenn Kafer, Mary, Vernon, Velda, Eldred & Donna Monia, Lester Marshall, Bertha & Donald Pickett, Mary, Ed, John & Merrill Stanley, Ellen & Mildred Tucker (10 boys, 11 girls). Teacher Gertrude Stanley. All Photos courtesy Margaret Henry

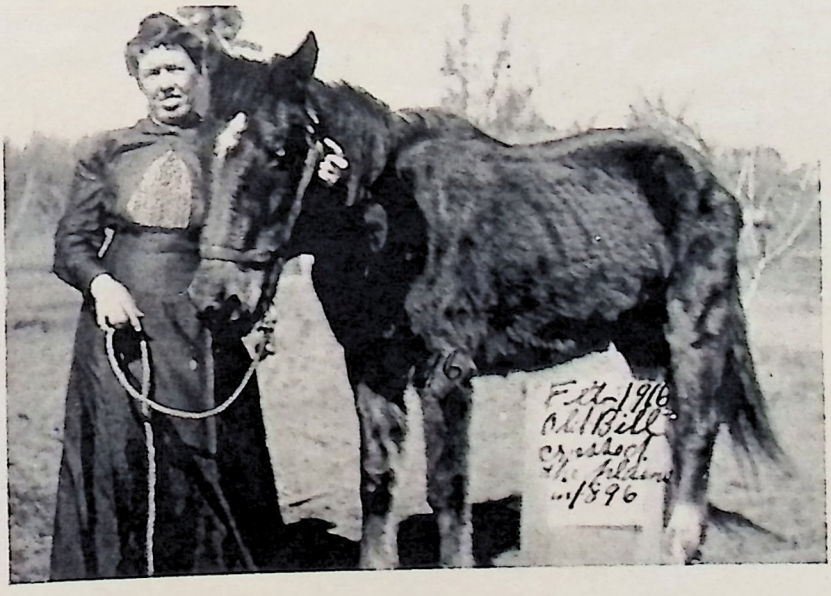


Photo Mildred Annie Tucker and "Old Bill" taken Feb. 1916 at Brownsboro. Caption on photo says "Old Bill crossed the plains in 1896."

Peter Simon Pioneer Hotel built in 1884

Peter and Anna Elizabeth (Etzenhauser), both born in Hesse Cassel, Germany, arrived at Sterling Creek in 1853. After three years they moved to Little Butte Creek. The Simon's had 13 children, with some dying in infancy. Anna's mother, Anna Catherine, and her brother, Conrad, arrived in 1858 and also settled on Little Butte Creek. Peter Simon operated a livery stable and sold and traded goods. In 1884, he built a large two-story hotel called the "Pioneer". The hotel was built with square nails and bricks, and it had three fireplaces in it, none built alike. One was made totally of agate rock. The hotel was a center for dancing parties, rug quiltings and weddings.

The Simons lived their lives on Little Butte Creek and descendants still reside in Eagle Point. The Simons are buried at the Antelope Cemetery.

The old hotel structure stood on Loto Street for many years, then in the late 1960's, it was purchased by Charles and Blanch Ryan and James and Jo Kingsland. The two families tore down the hotel and moved it just off the Butte Falls highway (near midway store turn off). Two large beautiful homes with fireplaces were built out of the old "Pioneer" Hotel.

Below: Peter Simon and his wife Anna Elizabeth (Etzenhauser) Simon

New members to welcome are:

Margaret E. Webster, Sally Jackson, Mary Schreier, Larry Smith, Barbara Whitted, Cathy Sandstrom.

The White City Community Improvement Association sponsored the following 17 local youngsters to memberships: Becky Reddell, Jakki Combs, Reggie Kinnaman, Tabby Gustefson, Cody Kelley, Curtis Cartwright, Kevin Krigbalm, Michaila Reddall, Shayna Brewer, Haylie Winner, Ashle Winner, Brieann Wilson, Wightman children, Jennifer Wears, Nick Tenney, Josh Brewer, Shelley Carlupe. These youngsters expressed an interest in joining the Eagle Point Historical Society by placing their names in baskets that were placed throughout the community. We thank the White City Community Improvement Assoc. for taking an interest in the children and their sponsorship.

Please help us keep our membership up and active. Memberships make a nice birthday or Christmas present.

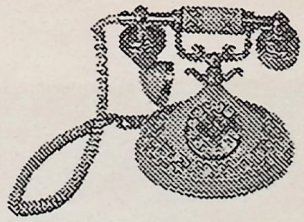
Teens $5.00
Single $7.50
Husband & Wife $12.50
(Business $10.00
Lifetime $100

Meetings

Join us in planning the Historical Future of Eagle Point. The Eagle Point Historical Society & Museum holds its regular meetings the second Monday of each month at 7PM. The public is invited. After each meeting, refreshments are served. Information 826-4166.

DONATIONS

Helen Wolgamott, old table for our new kictchen display; Everette Jennings, box of large notebook binders; Herb Lusk, donated the folowing items for our educational displays: 1930 Kodak Camera, Instamatic X-15 camera, No. 1A folding pocket Kodak, box with 8m/m film, "Mamiya Six" camera with flash and Weston light meter, several "Yank" magazines, Sketches of Japan during the war and a Navy War photography book. Bob Kelty donated part of his lifetime phone collection. Bob was a local "telephone career man". This collection includes several rare early telephone "testers", switchboard operator items, Forest Service phones and much more.



Board Members

Don Reynolds, President
Wayne Jackson, Vice President
Larry Vaughn, Treasurer
Carol Reynolds, Secretary
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Helen Wolgamott
Ernie Redington
Walt Barker
Barbara Hegne, Curator

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Sharon Barker, Volunteers
Betty Bedingfield, Parliamentarian
Norma Kuyper & Don Reynolds, Cemetery
Walt Barker, Building
Helen Wolgamott, Grounds
Amy Dawson, Hostess
Barbara Hegne, Membership

Staff Volunteers:

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Beryl Hickson
Arlene Hoffman
Midge Harnish
Inita Kaiser
Ernie Redington
Sharon Barker
Walt Barker
Mazie Neece
Helen Wolgamott
Virginia Cutler
Sally Corriveau
Carol Reynolds

Volunteer Helpers:

Julie Lee
Gerry Craver
Mary Reis
Joyce Bloomquist
Everett Jennings
Don Reynolds
Carole Reynolds
Ernie Redington
Ted Hoffman
Tina Redington
Lynn Helgedalen

Membership:
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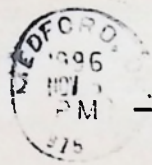
Single $7.50
Husband & Wife $12.50
Business $10.00
Lifetime $100

Join Our Family Tree

Winter Hours: Thurs, Friday & Sunday noon until 4pm, Saturday 10 am until 4pm and Tuesday 9am until 4pm. We will gladly open other hours with sufficient notice. Call Barbara 826-9725 or Museum 826-4166.

We are located in the historic district of Eagle Point, Oregon, between the old Antelope Covered Bridge and the Butte Creek Mill on North Royal.

Eagle Point Historical Society & Museum
P.O. Box 201
Eagle Point, Oregon
97524



To

Woodville Museum
P. O. Box 1288
Rogue River, Oregon 97537